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The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" As a matter of fact, specific proposals were put forward. But the Finance Committee put the whole scheme under class III. This year again they put it under class III. In spite of it, certain proposals for remodelling the drainage in the Godavari delta have been put in class II and will come up for discussion in the budget."

Mr. D. Narayana Raju :—" May I know why the remodelling of the channels and the drainage of the delta were mixed up instead of each being kept separate ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" They were considered to be a part of a comprehensive programme."

Mr. D. Narayana Raju :—" The remodelling of the channels relates to irrigation, and this remodelling has so long been going on. So far as the ryots are concerned, they find that it does not do them any good. But drainage was badly neglected for a long number of years and needs immediate attention. May I know what difficulty is there to take up drainage separately ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" It will be considered, Sir."

Marine

Increased estimates for the Tuticorin Deep Water Harbour scheme.

*220 *Q.*—Mr. C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar : Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the estimates for the Tuticorin Deep Water Harbour scheme have now risen to 57 lakhs while they were only 40 lakhs in the beginning and, if so, what are the chief reasons for the large increase ;

(*b*) whether the dues collected at the Harbour have recently been increased very much and, if so, to what extent and whether there is a likelihood of the dues being increased if the scheme is to be constructed according to the revised estimates and, if so, to what extent ;

(*c*) whether there is a proposal to change the site of the harbour and, if so, what the cost of the change will be and whether shop owners and house owners near the present harbour have protested against it ; and

(*d*) whether it is a fact that the citizens of Tuticorin held a public meeting on the 28th November 1926 and passed resolutions protesting against the increasing cost on the ground that it will seriously affect the interests of trade in the port and, if so, whether copies of the resolutions have been sent to the Government and whether the Government have passed orders on the same and to what effect ?

A.—(*a*) The estimates prepared in 1923 by the Harbour Engineer-in-Chief to Government for the execution of the harbour works at Tuticorin amounted to Rs. 39·96 lakhs. The works are now estimated to cost about Rs. 57 lakhs. The increase is due partly to the provision for the construction of a dry dock for the use of the vessels working at the port, and mainly to the need for additional plant, including a more powerful dredger capable of dealing expeditiously with a very compact hard stratum of yellow sandstone conglomerate which has been encountered at 24 feet below water.

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(*b*) The Landing and Shipping dues at the port of Tuticorin were raised from 6 annas to 10 annas per ton on 1st July 1923 and from 10 annas to 11 annas and 3 pies per ton on 1st April 1924. The Government indicated in 1923 that it should be possible to finance the scheme, then estimated to cost about Rs. 40 lakhs, with an eventual tonnage rate of about Re. 1. It is not at present anticipated that the increase of the estimates will necessitate a further increase of the dues.

(*c*) There is no proposal to change the site selected in 1923. The Government have received no representation from the owners of property in Tuticorin.

(*d*) The Indian Chamber of Commerce at Tuticorin has sent a communication referring to the meeting of 2?th November 1926. Copies of resolutions passed at the meeting have not been received by the Government.

Mr. C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar :—" Sir, as regards the answer to clause (*a*), may I know whether the Government have got a guarantee that the maximum estimate has been reached at Rs. 57 lakhs ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" At the present moment the position is this: the improvement of the Tuticorin harbour involves a certain amount of dredging and the construction of certain works. The dredging proceeded on the report that we received that coral of a certain consistency and hardness formed the basis of a sub-stratum at the bottom of the sea at that place. It has been found, as is referred to in the answer, that there is a harder stratum of yellow sandstone conglomerate, which requires more effective dredging. That is the only new item which has been introduced into this matter. It is not expected that this estimate will be increased. I may add further that in response to a request that emanated from the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Tuticorin, and certain other interests in Tuticorin, they have been given the opportunity to avail themselves of other expert opinion, if they are so advised, in order that they may verify whether this increase is really necessitated or is beneficial."

Mr. C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar :—" I am afraid the answer does not give any definite information . . ."

The hon. the President :—" Order, order. It is not in order to pass any remarks as to the nature of the answer given by the Government. I may remind the House and draw attention to rule 9, that supplementary questions are intended to elicit further information on questions of fact which are dealt with in the answers given by the Government."

Mr. C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar :—" With due deference to you, Sir, I simply wanted to repeat the question."

The hon. the President :—" The hon. Member will not be entitled to repeat any answer which the Government has given. He has simply to put supplementary questions arising out of it."

Mr. C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar :—" May I not repeat the question when I have not got a definite answer ? "

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The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" Whether good, bad or indifferent, the answer given by the Government has to be taken."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" There is no answer at all in the case of my question."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" It is not in order for hon. Members to repeat the questions."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I take it that in the original investigation the foundation was not sufficiently tested below 24 feet ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" Whether there is hard coral at the bottom of the sea, how can it be tested below 24 feet ? Twenty-four feet of coral has been removed and dredging has been completed. Below 24 feet a further hard stratum has emerged."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I know whether any pit was excavated to test the foundation to be laid ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" Excavations were done in various places. This was, as will appear from the papers which are at the disposal of the hon. Member, an unexpected hard stratum, a fault as they call in geological language. It is an unexpected stratum of harder coral which underlies the bed of coral which has been excavated."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I know whether this powerful dredger has been purchased ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" No, Sir."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" Is any attempt made to purchase it ? Are any tenders called for ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" Before any such purchase takes place, the Tuticorin people have asked that if possible other expert opinion over and above the Harbour Engineer's should be taken. In response to that, we are willing to have other expert opinion taken. Moreover, I propose about the 3rd or 4th of April to go to Tuticorin with the Secretary to the Department and interview the commercial interests, both Indian and European and find exactly what their attitude is in regard not only to this question of dredging but also in regard to the question of increase of rates which forms a subject of this question."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I know whether there is a suggestion to use the new dredger which is in use at the Cochin harbour ? Something was said about it in a communiqué ? "

The hon. Sir C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" That was one of the suggestions. But it is considered much better to take the line that I have suggested."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I know as to why intermediate increase from 6 annas to Re. 1 has been approved ? It has not yet risen to Re. 1. It is only at 11 annas 3 pies. Why two stages of intermediate increases have been ordered ? "

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into power. The Justice Party had a majority of seats in the first three years and they were then in power. But during the second period of three years they were in power with the assistance of the Government votes . . ."

Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR :—" Mr. President, Sir, in the budget of this year the Cauvery-Mettur project looms very large. This project has been before us for several years now and I should like to sound a note of warning regarding the way in which the expenditure on that project is being incurred without an irrigation law. Enormous expenditure is being incurred on that project. The staff consists of one Chief Engineer in charge of the whole operations, two Superintending Engineers, four Executive Engineers, one Electrical Engineer—all these on high pay—one Collector, eight Deputy Collectors and so on. Already large expenditure has been incurred. His Excellency the Governor was saying the other day that 37 miles of road had been completed and quarters for a gang of five thousand coolies had been built. In the budget of the current year the amount budgeted runs to one crore and though the whole amount is not likely to be spent, as much as 54 lakhs of rupees has been spent. For the coming year 1927-28 they have budgeted for an expenditure of Rs. 120 lakhs. And now the question is whether it will be safe to spend all this amount on this project or for the matter of that on any other big irrigation work without an irrigation law. Hon. Members will remember that the detailed estimate for this project runs to six crores and 12 lakhs of rupees. The chances are, as we know in all matters like this, that this estimate will be considerably increased by the time the work is over. When my hon. Friend the Law Member who is a very cautious and learned lawyer introduced the Irrigation Bill in this Council on the 6th February 1924 the burden of his song as I take it rightly, was that without an irrigation law, it would not be possible to spend large sums of money on such projects and he referred to the Mettur project among them in particular. He stated that on former occasions in 1909 and in previous years when this Government approached the Government of India for loans to carry out irrigation projects the Government of India refused the loan on the solitary ground that it was unsafe to carry on irrigation projects like that without an irrigation law and if they did so they would be involved in embarassing litigation. Again, the Law Member stated that this Government approached the Government of India with a similar request on another occasion and the same reply was given to them. Again the hon. the Law Member stated that he himself went in person, as we all know he did, and had personal consultation with the Viceroy and with the Members of the Government of India. Even then he had the same answer, namely, that without an irrigation law the Government of India would not be prepared to grant a loan. This he stated on 6th February 1924 in introducing the Bill. When the financial year was about to close in 1924 he stated that even though it would not be possible to pass the Bill before the close of the financial year, if a Bill was introduced and the principles thereof were accepted in this Council, the Government would approach the Government of India and tell them that this Council had committed itself to an irrigation law and induce them to grant the necessary loan. It was on that undertaking that we consented to the first reading of the Irrigation Bill in 1924.

"That was so long ago as the beginning of 1924. The Irrigation Bill was accepted by this Council; it was referred to a Select Committee; the 1 p.m.